(d) the action taken to prevent such incidents and also against those found negligent in the discharge of their duty in this incident?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. During the night of 24th and 25th June, 2004, there was a storm and heavy rain in Lucknow, the trees at Gheru campus of ITRC were uprooted and fell on the overhead electric supply and telephonic lines resulting in total breakdown of power supply and communication. Upon investigation, it was revealed that in the night, power supply through generator could not be restored as stand-by generator could not be switched on due to ingress of excessive moisture in the main circuit breaker. On next morning a total of 674 rodents and 3 guinca pigs were found dead in the cages in animal house. Out of these, 176 rodents were adults (79 rats and 97 mice). The rest 498 were suckling pups of rats and mice. None of them were big animals.

(c) These animals were housed for acclimatization and breeding purpose. The estimated financial loss due to the unforeseen incident is Rs.10,800/-

(d) In addition to normal Power Corporation supply and 125 K.V. backup generator, another 125 K.V. generator is being connected to the animal house to feed air-conditioning and Air Handling Unit (AHU). Meantime, to meet any eventuality a hired 50 KVA DG set is kept ready to feed power supply to animal house for running the blower of A.H.U. and split air conditioners

Also, the animal house maintenance sub-committee has been asked to periodically meet and review the facilities, conduct mock drills for preparedness to handle any unforeseen events. The incident was not due to the failure of discharge of duty by any of the officials.

Release of Indian hostages/captives in Iraq

†*447. SHRI PYARELAL KHANDELWAL: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a state of confusion prevailed regarding release of Indian hostages in Iraq only due to the evasive policy of Government;

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi

(b) whether it is also a fact that a large number of Indian Nationals are still working in American Military camps as captives;

(c) if so, the details thereof and by when Government would bring them back to India;

(d) whether Indian Embassy in Iraq remained a silent spectator in this case; and

(e) if not, the details of action taken by it?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI RAO INDERJIT SINGH) . (a) No, Sir.

(b) No Indian national is known to be working in American military camps as captives.

(c) Does not arise

(d) No, Sir

(e) Immediately after the kidnapping of three Indian truck drivers became known, the Indian Embassy in Baghdad met religious leaders seeking their intercession for the release of the hostages. The Mission maintained close contacts with the religious leaders and gave wide publicity to india's principled and well-known policies and appeals made by Minister of External Affairs and Minister of State for External Affairs for release of hostages on humanitarian grounds. Mission's officials also were in contact with the Egyptian Mission whose national is also among the hostages The Mission made repeated enquiries in various official and unofficial quarters for enquiring about the welfare of the hostages In addition, the Mission also took the following steps in the interest of other Indians:—

(1) The Mission assisted the Indian returning to India from Iraq in obtaining transit visas from the Jordanian Embassy in Baghdad;

(2) Indian mission in Baghdad also contacted employers of Indians who wish to return to India and for expeditious settlement of their dues by the employers

(3) The Indian Embassy in Baghdad has sent its officials to some of the places in Iraq where the Indians are located to enquire after their well being and safety and to provide them assistance and guidance in case they wish to leave Iraq.

(4) The Mission also arranged accommodation for several Indian nationals while in transit in Baghdad. In some cases medical attention was also provided.

Indians in foreign jails

†*448. SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI:
SHRI AMAR SINGH:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state

(a) the number of Indian lodged in foreign jails, country-wise;

(b) whether any steps are being taken by Government to get them released; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI RAO INDERJIT SINGH): (a) A Statement giving information on Indians in foreign jails is placed on the Table.

(b) and (c) Indian Missions/Posts abroad try to get Indian nationals in foreign jails released, if possible. Indians Missions/Posts abroad provide assistance which includes requesting speedy trials; seeking consular access to the detainees and prisoners; providing advice/guidance in legal and other matters; interacting with the relatives in India; ensuring proper treatment in the prison and facilitating repatriation to India on release.

Delinking of Vadinar area from Kandla Port Trust

*449. PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA:
SHRI LEKHRAJ BACHANI:

Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken any final decision on the long outstanding request of the Government of Gujarat to delink Vadinar area from the port limits of the Kandla Port Trust and return it back to the State Government;

(b) if so, the decison taken by Government in this regard; and

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.